

# Flamingo Watercolor



## Engage and Reflect

Watch *Virtual Vitamin Z - Zoo Educational Lesson: Learn How We Helped with a Flamingo Rescue in South Africa*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gJ55HMGuWE>



## Skills

- Observing



## NGSS Science and Engineering Practices

- Structures and properties of matter



## Experience

- 5-10 minutes
- 1 or more people

Flamingos get their bright pink and red coloration from what they eat, including crustaceans and algae. Algae contains pigments, or colors, called beta-carotene, part of the carotenoid family. If flamingos don't eat a diet high in beta-carotene, their feathers would white and a dull gray color, similar to their coloration when they are young. Humans eat several vegetables that contain beta-carotene, such as carrots, squash, grapefruit, oranges and apricots. To make a watercolor flamingo painting, follow the steps on the attached activity!



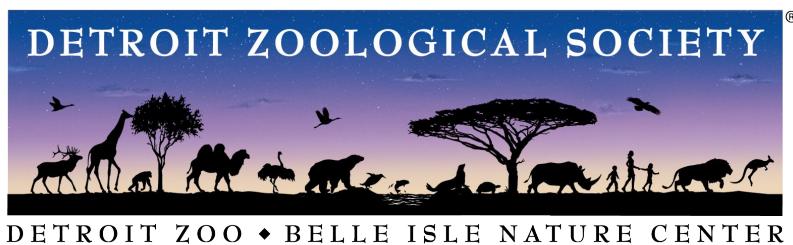
## Celebrating and Saving Wildlife

In January of 2019, Detroit Zoological Society animal care staff stepped in to help when droughts in South Africa caused thousands of flamingo nests to be abandoned. A coordinated effort of wildlife experts from across the world saved many of the eggs and chicks, releasing them once they were old enough to care for themselves.



## Take Action

Droughts, major rainfall events and other weather-related events are becoming more common as our global climate changes. You can help mitigate the causes of climate change by eating more plant-based meals. Livestock raised for humans to eat release methane gas as they digest their food. Methane is a gas that acts like a heat-trapping blanket in our atmosphere, causing the world's climate to change. Try including plants that are rich in beta-carotene to your diet!



# Flamingo Watercolor

## Tools

White paper

Pink, orange, red watercolor paints

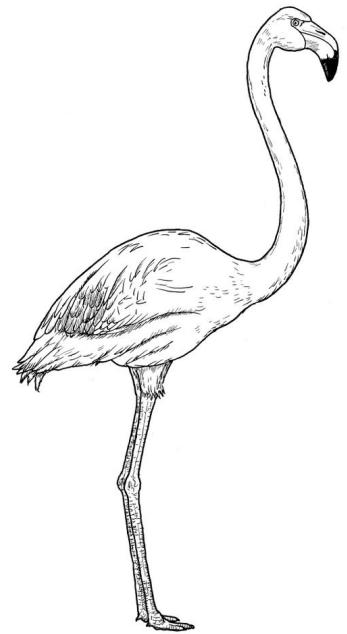
Paintbrush

Drinking straw

Cup of water

Black marker

*1 or more people*



## Directions

- Place the paper on a table, fill your cup with water.
- Paint a long, slightly curved flamingo neck.
- Make several small pools of red, orange and pink watercolor paint at the base of the neck.
- Use the straw to blow the paint towards the edge of the paper, forming the flamingo's body as the colors mix.
- When the paint dries, draw on a beak and eye with the marker.

Notes - Protect the environment by using a reusable straw. Just wash it when you're done!

